

Strategy – Hotel Discounts for Drowsy Drivers

General Description

It is estimated that drivers who were fatigued, fell asleep, fainted or lost consciousness accounted for 9,486 crashes in 2003-2005 with 100 fatalities and 7,295 injuries, representing an injury or death in three of every four crashes. Drowsy driving is an often ignored driving behavior and one engaged in the majority of drivers at one time or another. However, some studies have shown that the risks of driving drowsy are the same as driving drunk (.089 BAC). Safety conscious drivers who would never get behind the wheel and drive after drinking alcohol will drive extended periods of time while drowsy, believing they can resist the tendency to fall asleep at the wheel. A recent survey by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety of U.S. and Canadian police officers found 93% of respondents felt drowsy driving was a serious problem. NHTSA data shows males are five times more likely than females to be involved in drowsy-driving crashes, possibly due to their reluctance to pull off the road to take a needed rest. The proposed program seeks to provide a respite hotel for drowsy drivers at discounted rates after a set time of night to encourage them to get a good night's rest rather than continue to drive while sleepy or tired.

Technical Attributes

Targets

The targets are all drivers (except commercial vehicles) on the road late in the evening who feel too tired (drowsy) to continue to drive safely but do feel safe pulling over to the side of a road or going to a convenience store parking lot to sleep in their vehicle.

Expected Effectiveness

With the cooperation of the hotel partners selected, a monthly (or quarterly) report will be requested asking for the number of drivers who participated in the program at their establishment.

Keys to Success

The number of people choosing to participate in the program should be an increasing number from quarter to quarter with publicity and awareness efforts. There will also be an opportunity to compare drowsy driving crash statistics to see if the percentage of drowsy driving crashes and fatalities improves from pre-program levels.

Potential Difficulties

The single greatest hurdle is developing the program so it is easy for a driver anywhere in the state to locate the nearest participating hotel offering Drowsy Driving discounts.

Appropriate Measures and Data	Program usage, drowsy driving crashes/fatalities, participating hotels, etc.
Associated Needs	None foreseen at this time.
Organizational, Institutional and Policy issues	All of the state's traffic safety conscious organizations should be involved in promotion, and possibly implementation, of the program. A lead agency will need to coordinate it. AAA Carolinas will work closely with the hotels in the program.
Issues Affecting Implementation Time	Any potential costs affecting operation of the program and finding the appropriate communication mechanism to link hotels with the needy drowsy driver.
Costs	May be a cost associated with an active, late-night connection to provide information to the drowsy driver, i.e. an evening phone operator using a GPS system to locate hotels near a driver's location.
Training	Needed by implementing organization.
Legislative Needs	None foreseen at this time